



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

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PSC Issues Port Washington Assessment - Seeks Public Comments

MADISON – The Public Service Commission has prepared a revised environmental assessment on the application of WE Energies to replace 320 megawatts of coal generation with a 1,090 megawatt natural gas-fired power plant in Port Washington.

The revised environmental assessment is being issued in response to a recent Dane County Circuit Court decision directing the PSC to evaluate the two 545 megawatt gas-fired generators on their own merits, without comparison to the environmental impacts of the existing coal generators.

The Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act (WEPA) requires the preparation of an environmental assessment to determine whether an environmental impact statement is needed.

The potential environmental impacts related to construction and operation of the new Port Washington gas-fired generators, the associated electric transmission lines and a new natural gas supply line were reviewed. The review included the effects on land use, aesthetics, noise levels, traffic congestion, protected species and archeological sites, aquatic resources and air emissions.

Based on the revised environmental assessment, the PSC WEPA Coordinator determined that preparation of an environmental impact statement is not necessary. The PSC is seeking input from the public regarding the revised environmental assessment and the decision that an environmental impact statement is not needed.

On December 20, 2002, the Commission approved a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for WE Energies to construct the gas-fired generators on the site of the existing coal-fired plant in Port Washington. The Commission approved the new generators to meet growing electricity demands in eastern Wisconsin.

Eastern Wisconsin's energy demands grow by about 2% every year and the cumulative impact by 2005 dictates the need for the new electric generation. The first of two Port Washington gas-fired generators is scheduled to go into operation in the summer of 2005.

Copies of the revised environmental assessment can be obtained from the WEPA Coordinator listed below. Comments on the environmental assessment should be sent by March 15, 2004 to the following address:

WEPA Coordinator
Port Washington Case (Docket 05-CE-117)
Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, Wisconsin
portwashington@psc.state.wi.us
608-266-2730

(END)